

YOUR
CHRIST
IS TOO
SMALL



Jurgen O. Schulz

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Dedicated to my wife

*The woman who has followed me beyond
what is reasonable—and even further.*

*She has loved me more than I ever
deserved—and then some.*

*She lets God show up in her life,
and it is wonderful to behold.*

*She has walked by my side in the journey
of discovering that Jesus
is greater and far more wonderful
than we ever imagined.*

Beloved Wendy, this is for you.



Foreword

Years ago I read a quote that stuck in my mind: "The minute we begin to get away from Jesus Himself, we begin to cloud our theology." A profound truth, but one that took a lot of time to process in my life. For many years I was preoccupied with the peripheral. Many side issues grabbed my attention and I majored on one after another, before finally wearing each one out. I was focused on the fringe. Eventually God turned my attention away from the marginal back to the centre, and I rediscovered the majestic wonder of Jesus Christ. It was breathtaking. It was like coming home. My heart took flight, and I found myself, as the song says, "filled with his goodness, lost in his love."

The Bible affirms regarding Christ, "in Him all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). When we get our eyes off Him, not only our theology—everything falls apart.

Marriages end up on the rocks; churches go to pieces; life comes apart. The universe does not function well apart from Him. It is only "in Him" that things hold together.

I believe that God is calling His people back to the Centrality of Christ. We have been denomination centered, doctrine centered, experience centered. God's declared purpose is "to gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10). He would have us Christ centered.

The present book is compilation of quotes drawn from a wide variety of sources, authors and theological perspectives. However diverse, almost all the writers cited share a common focus and a mutual attraction to the core issue: The Lord Jesus Christ. They remind us that it's all about Him.

Oswald Chambers said, "I think if I have an ambition it is that I might have honorable mention in anyone's personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ." Similarly, if the following material encourages some to turn their eyes to Jesus, I will feel well recompensed.

So read on. Reflect. Enjoy. And, as you do, may you find that everything else grows "strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace."



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The Lord Jesus Christ

cannot be reduced to . . .

- **WORDS**

- The “unspeakable gift” is beyond description

- **DOCTRINE**

- His “unsearchable riches” defy definition

- **TRUTH**

- He is a living Person, not a proposition

- **PRINCIPLES**

- He is the personification of all virtue

- **MORALITY**

- Our standard is not a code but a Character

- **RELIGION**

- He did not come to bring religion but Life

- **THEOLOGY**

- He is the visible display of God’s personality

- **SYSTEMS**

- All attempts to contain Him fail miserably

- **THE BIBLE**

- The written Word sheds light; He IS the light

1

Your Christ is too peripheral

*Everything comes from HIM;
Everything happens through HIM
Everything ends up in HIM.
Always glory!
Always praise!*

ROMANS 11:36 (The Message)



I think the
minute we
begin to get
away from

**Jesus
Himself,**

we begin
to cloud our
theology.

-Anonymous



Christianity
is Christ;
and we ruin our
religion if we
centre it
anywhere else.

-James S. Stewart



In the New Testament
Jesus upstages
everyone else. He is not only
the center
of the Gospel; He is the
whole Gospel.
He is the
Good News.

-Brennan Manning



Beware of
a religion in which
Christ is not
the first, foremost,
chief, principal
object,—the
very Alpha
in the alphabet of
your faith.

-J. C. Ryle



The message
of Christ is not
Christianity.

The message
of Christ is
Christ.


-Gary Amirault



The good news
of the gospel
is not an announcement
or a proclamation,
it's a Person:
Jesus the Christ.
**Jesus is
the gospel.**

-Leonard Sweet



ESUS Christ . . . walked into time and quietly divided it into before and after—B.C. and A.D. He walked into the realm of thought and altered all our conceptions about God and life and destiny. He walked into our moral conceptions and codes, and now we are good or bad according to whether we embody His spirit or not. He walked into the chaos of human relationships and projected a Kingdom which is destined to gather all our chaos into cosmos, to be the goal and end of all human history.

-E. Stanley Jones



The central fact
of the universe and
the perfect
encyclopedia of
all moral and
spiritual truth
is in Christ,
the Incarnate Word,
the Lamb slain, the
ascended King.

-Alexander MacLaren



Christianity
without Christ is
a chest without
a treasure,
a frame without
a portrait,
a corpse without
breath.

-John R. W. Stott



This is a reason
for much of the
powerlessness of our
churches today;
we have converted
people to the church,
to our doctrines, to
our projects and
organizations—
**to almost
anything but
Christ Himself.**

-Rick Joyner



God has nothing
for His Church beyond
**who Christ is
in Himself.**

He is sufficient,
He is superior,
He is sovereign,
He is supreme,
and He is the
summation
of all God has for us.

-David Bryant



IT IS THE
NATURE OF
CHRIST
TO BE THE
CENTER.


-Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Christianity
does not exist
for a moment
or in any respect
apart from
Christ.


-Karl Barth



 THE story is told that when Ghatama Buddha was dying . . . some of his disciples asked how they could best remember him. He told them not to bother; that it was his teaching, not his person, that mattered. Such is the basis of religion — ideological, philosophical, educative belief-systems. Such is not the case with Jesus Christ and Christianity. Everything centers in Him. Everything is inherent in Jesus, His Person and His continuing activity. Everything functions only by the dynamic of the risen and living Lord Jesus Christ.

-James A. Fowler



UNDAMENTALLY, our Lord's message was Himself. He did not come merely to preach a Gospel; He himself is that Gospel. He did not come merely to give bread; He said, "I am the bread." He did not come merely to shed light; He said, "I am the light." He did not come merely to show the door; He said, "I am the door." He did not come merely to name a shepherd; He said, "I am the shepherd." He did not come merely to point the way; He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."


-J. Sidlow Baxter



Christianity
is not a dedication
to a system
of rules or of thought,
but a dedication
to a Person.
This is unique among the
religions of the world.

-William Temple



E was asked once by a Hindu professor what it was that he had found in Christianity . . . that he had not found in his old religion. “I have found Christ,” said Sadhu Sundar Singh. “Oh yes, I know,” said the professor rather impatiently. “But what particular doctrine have you found or principle that you did not have before?”

“The particular thing I have found,” replied Sadhu Sundar Singh, “is Christ.”

-John R. W. Stott



Everything "Christian"

is derived from the
Being and activity of Jesus.

All of **Christianity** is
contingent and dependent
on Him, and
expressive of Him.

**Christianity is
Christ!**

-James A. Fowler



We have instructed
the church in nearly
everything but becoming
**disciples of
Jesus Christ.**

We have filled people
**with doctrines
instead of Deity;**
we have given them
manuals instead of
Emmanuel.

-Francis Frangipagne



If I am to know God, I will
know Him through **Jesus**.

If I am to gain knowledge,
it is deposited in **Jesus**.

If I am to have wisdom,
I will find it in **Jesus**.

If God dwells in me, it is
because **Jesus** dwells in me.

If I wish to study God,
I must study **Jesus**.

If the Holy Spirit is active
in my life, I will hear Him
speak of **Jesus**.

-Gayle D. Erwin



To be
Christians
is to live our lives
through, on, in,
under, unto, for and
like Jesus Christ,
and **Christ** then
becomes the
center of
our lives.

-John R. W. Stott

2

Your Christ is too doctrinal

*You search the Scriptures,
for in them you think you have
eternal life; and these are they
which testify of ME.*

JOHN 5:39



It is Christ Himself,
not the Bible, who is the
true word of God. The
Bible, read in the
right spirit and
with the guidance of good
teachers, will bring us
to Him. We must not
use the Bible as a sort of
encyclopedia out of which
texts can be taken for
use as weapons.

-C. S. Lewis



The Scriptures
should be read
with the aim of
finding Christ
in them. Whoever turns
aside from this object,
even though he wears him-
self out all his life in learning,
he will never reach
the knowledge
of the truth.

-John Calvin



Hundreds of people
today are devoting them-
selves to phases of
truth, to causes.

Jesus Christ never
asks us to devote ourselves
to a cause or a creed;

He asks us
to devote ourselves
to Him absolutely,
and take up that
cross daily.

-Oswald Chambers



THERE was one mistake into which the early Church was never in any danger of falling. In those early days men never thought of Jesus Christ as a figure in a book... They did not think of Him as someone who had been but as someone who is. They did not think of Jesus Christ as someone whose teaching must be discussed and debated and argued about; they thought of Him as someone whose presence could be enjoyed and whose constant fellowship could be experienced. Their faith was not founded on a book; their faith was founded on a person.

-William Barclay



God did not just
just reveal factual data,
informational propositions
of a belief-system
of doctrine or theology,
but He "revealed
His Son..."
(Gal. 1:12).

-James A. Fowler



One of the primary
schemes of the devil
is to turn the Bible into the
Tree of Knowledge
for us, instead of the
Tree of Life.

He is seeking to make it
law to us rather than a
revelation of Christ,
in whom alone
life is found.

-Rick Joyner



THIS tendency to transform the work of the Living God into a philosophical doctrine is the constant temptation of theology, and their greatest disloyalty when they transform the action of the Spirit which brings forth fruit in themselves into an ethic, a new law, into principles which only have to be ‘applied.’

-Jacques Ellul



The historical
JESUS
is himself the
embodiment
of truth...

-John R. W. Stott



They (the early Christians) did not say,
"This is the truth:
we will learn it,
and it will instruct us."
They said, "This is the
Lord: we have
waited for Him,
and He will save us."


-E. Stanley Jones



The Word
became flesh—
and then through
theologians
it became
words again.

-Karl Barth



 HE so-called "church fathers" of the first few centuries of Christianity . . . reduced Christianity into moralistic and ethical religious rules and into creedalistic concepts of correct content of thought. They so quickly let go of the dynamic life of Jesus Christ as the essence of Christianity, and allowed it to become merely a belief system.

-James A. Fowler



The One who
is the way, the truth
and the life . . .
will not be reduced
to our logical
categories
and intellectual
formulas.

-Tony Campolo



THE break of Christianity with Christ, turning Him into the Word become word, was the most disastrous break possible. For it gave up the one thing in Christianity that makes it unique—the Word become flesh. All the other faiths have the Word become word, but only the Christian faith has the Word become flesh.

-E. Stanley Jones



The essence of
Christianity
is not a standardized
belief-system.

The essence
of Christianity
is not a consensus
of doctrine...

Jesus Christ
is the essence
of Christianity.


-James A. Fowler



Few were
as careless of
orthodox
formulas
as Jesus.

-C. K. Barrett



 AM not such a fool as to run amuck against theology, as some people in this day do. But what I wish to insist upon is that the first form of Christianity is not a theory, but a history, and that the revelation of God is the biography of a man.

-Alexander MacLaren



The doctrinal
statement
of Christianity,
which is the verbal
expression of
the Living Truth,
may have been
mistaken for
the Truth itself.

-Wesley W. Nelson



Those who
have succeeded in
defining doctrine
most closely
have lost Christ
most completely.

-James A. Stewart



THE OBJECT
OF FAITH
IS NOT
THE TEACHING
BUT THE
TEACHER.

-Soren Kierkegaard



THE trouble with "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" interpreters is that they contend for their interpretation as "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." They confound the Incarnation with their interpretation of it. They have the Incarnation neatly tied up in a package of statements about it and they contend for that package . . . But Jesus may have stepped out beyond the web of their own words long ago. The Word is always bigger than our words. Paul calls Jesus the "unspeakable gift"—you can't speak Him completely. In the end you have to kneel in adoration at the Wonder of the Word.

-E. Stanley Jones



It is possible to be
exact and correct
in your doctrine and
to be perfectly dead.
Whatever may be the
need of the recovery
of lost truth,
the need over all...
is the recovery of spiritual
revelation as to
the Lord Jesus,
to see Him anew.

-T. Austin-Sparks



*Beyond the sacred page
I seek thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for thee,
O Living Word!*

-Mary Lathbury

3

Your Christ is too institutional

*The Church is Christ's body,
in which he speaks and acts,
by which he fills everything
with his presence.*


EPHESIANS 1:23 (The Message)



In conversion
you are not attached
primarily to an order,
nor to an institution,
nor a movement,
nor a set of beliefs, nor a
code of action —
you are attached primarily
to a Person,
and secondarily to these
other things.

-E. Stanley Jones



 SCHOLARS of Church History have indicated that the concept of orthodoxy was introduced into Christendom, not in the 1st Century, but early in the 4th Century, under the leadership of the Roman emperor Constantine. He desired a unified Christianity as a state religion, in order to consolidate his own power.

-Daniel Andersen



All the wretched
mess that exists
in the organization of
Christianity today . . .
is because something
specific in itself,
either a movement,
a mission, a teaching,
a testimony, a fellowship,
has taken the place
of Christ.

-T. Austin Sparks



Christianity
appeals
to all nations,
races and
creeds, but you
have made it so
ecclesiastical
that it appeals to
nobody.

-Rabindranath Tagore



It is a tragic
misrepresentation
of the Church when
the basis of our
commonality
is calculated by
doctrinal agreement,
rather than
the indwelling
Lord Jesus.

-James A. Fowler



YOU can sketch a fairly accurate picture of the history of the Church like this: God gave a wonderful fresh breath of Holy Spirit life (on the day of Pentecost, and repeatedly, during renewal down the centuries) and man comes along and says, “Wonderful! Now, let’s set up a Church preservation Society to keep things going.” And he begins to organize a new denomination, a new fellowship, a different structure, fresh rules and regulations and activities, during which the Holy Spirit quietly (and often unnoticed) makes his departure. Does this new forward looking framework collapse overnight? Not a bit of it! It goes on, year after year, even century after century—the world’s counterfeit of the real thing.

-David Watson



Great truths were
restored to the church
through every previous
revival. Many of these
truths were carried to
extremes and error
because the church
allowed them to become
the focal point
in place of the only
One upon Whom
we must keep our
attention.

-Rick Joyner



Many who should be
disciples of Jesus
today are still only
disciples of... a reformer,
a religious group or
even an idea [that]
has displaced
their loyalty to
Jesus Christ.

-Geoffrey T. Bull



Nearly every
denomination
or movement seems to
develop a particular
slant or system of
traditions, some of which
ultimately obscure the
simplicity and purity
of devotion to
Christ.


-Francis Frangipagne



MOST denominations originated with a genuine move of the Spirit which imparted truth to the church. These truths were meant to lead the church closer to Jesus, and unquestionably this was accomplished for many. However, with each of these movements there have always been people who never saw beyond the truth itself. They began to build their towers around the truths, rather than seeing them as mere stepping stones to The Truth. These towers have now become many of the denominations scattered across the spiritual landscape of Christianity.

-Rick Joyner



 IN the beginning the Church was a **fellowship** of men and women who centered their lives on the living Christ. They had a personal and vital **relationship** to the Lord. It transformed them and the world around them. Then the Church moved to Greece, and it became a **philosophy**. Later it moved to Rome, and it became an **institution**. Next it moved to Europe and it became a **culture**. Finally it moved to America, and it became an **enterprise**. We've got far too many churches and so few **fellowships**.


-Richard Halverson



Our little systems
have their day,
They have their day
and cease to be ;
They are but broken
lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord,
art more than they.

-Author Unknown



HAT am I going to work for? Am I going to work to try to establish some society, some denomination, or some 'undenomination,' to win a place for a teaching, or an interpretation, or a system of truth? Is it to some THING that I am devoted, or is it to secure for the Lord Jesus His absolute centrality and supremacy?


-T. Austin-Sparks



Beware of
anything that
competes
with loyalty
to Jesus
Christ.

-Oswald Chambers



S long as religion was denominational-centric God could not trust us with power. Had he done so, it would have run into a denominational megalomania . . . But if religion is Christ-centric, if to be a Christian is to be Christlike, to catch his mind and Spirit, then I think God can back that with power to the utmost . . . God can trust us with power here.

-E. Stanley Jones



What is true of all
organizations, buildings,
individual people,
and the whole of
creation is true of
churches: They
exhibit life when
they are defined by and
live out of a center
rather than when they
are defined by and live on
the perimeter.

-Gregory A. Boyd



Judaism was a fold,
a circumference
without a center,
but Christianity is a flock,
where we have a
center without a
circumference. We
have no wall about us, but
we are gathered
around Him, our
Good Shepherd.

-H. A. Ironside



THE church is the church when it's all about the Initiator, the Originator, the Instigator, the Sacrificial Lamb of the Church. There is no other focal point, no other reason, no other point, no other motivation, no other structure... just the Person of Jesus living His life through His people...

-Sojourner magazine



The church has
only this task: to
embody Christ,
manifest His nature,
demonstrate
God's love to the
world and proclaim
His Lordship **over**
all things.

-Manfred Haller



*If we are the Body
Why aren't His arms reaching
Why aren't His hands healing
Why aren't His words teaching*

*And if we are the Body
Why aren't His feet going
Why is His love not showing
there is a way.*

-Casting Crowns



The Church
is the
representation
and continuation
of Christ.

-Adolph Saphir



No assembly,
no church,
no movement,
no testimony,
no fellowship
is justified in
its existence
from God's standpoint
except insofar as
Christ is
expressed by it.

-T. Austin-Sparks

4

Your Christ is too religious

*For in Christ, neither our most
conscientious religion nor disregard of
religion amounts to anything. What
matters is something far more interior:
faith expressed in love.*

GALATIANS 5:6 (The Message)



You did not
receive a religion
about Jesus,
but the actual
Person
of Jesus.

-Francis Frangipagne



His aim was
never to give us a
new religion in order
that we might live a bit
more decently—
in that case Moses and
his law would have
sufficed.

-Christopher Blumhardt



God
is not
interested in
religion.

-William Temple



Take one look
at church history and
you will see that
Christianity needs
to hear the message of
Jesus as much
as or more than
most religions.

-Bruxy Cavey



Jesus
calls men,
not to a
new religion,
but to life.

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Religion
is a satanic
counterfeit
of a relationship
with God.

-Robert Heidler



Religious sin
is the only sin
Jesus publicly
confronted.

-Gregory A. Boyd



Satan is not,
as men suppose,
the instigator
of their crimes.

Religion is the
special sphere
of his influence.

-Sir Robert Anderson



Men never
do evil
so completely
and cheerfully as
when they do it from
religious
conviction.

-Blaise Pascal



The essence of the
religious spirit
is getting life from
being truer and more
righteous than others,
rather than
getting life
from God alone.
It is living from the
perimeter rather
than the
center.

-Gregory A. Boyd



It is a profound
irony that the
Son of God
visited this planet
and one of the chief
complaints against
him was that he was
not religious
enough.

-Rebecca M. Pippert



Our life is not to
be found in our
correct doctrine
or in our piety, as
important as these are.

To get life from
these is religion.

Our life is rather to
be found in Jesus
Christ, and in Jesus
Christ alone.

-Gregory A. Boyd



Religion...
is the attempted
replacement
of the divine
work by a
human
manufacture.

-Karl Barth



TO summarize church history in a crass, but not altogether inaccurate, way... Jesus came with the message "Religion is redundant. God has gone out of the religion business and he wants you to experience everything you turned to religion for—forgiveness, salvation, instruction—through me." And his followers said, "Wow. What a cool idea. We should build a religion out of that!" And they did.


-Bruxy Cavey



Religion shifts
our focus off
Jesus Christ
and places it on
ourselves and how
well we are or aren't
performing.

-Steve McVey



OD is not interested in religion, but He is tremendously interested in life. You cannot read the New Testament without realizing that the Lord Jesus did not care a whit for the Sabbath regulations of his day when they were set against the need of a broken man for healing. God is not interested in stained glass windows, organ solos, congregation hymns or even pastoral prayers half so much as he is in producing love filled homes, generous hearts and brave men and women who can live right in midst of the world and keep their heads and hearts undefiled.


-Ray Stedman



We need to ask
forgiveness from
God, from the world,
for being **religious**.
We have striven to be
religious when we
were **called to**
be loving.

-Gregory A. Boyd



 BELIEVE in a secular Christ. I do not believe in a religious Christ. I believe one of the whole difficulties of Christianity is we've put Christ in a special building for a special occasion, with special forms of worship, special music, special everything. Cut the special out; put your hands in your pocket and go in your old blue jeans. Christ is a secular person.

-Norman Grubb



Many a soul begins
to come to God
when he flings off
being religious,
because there is only
one Master
of the human heart, and
and that is not religion
Jesus Christ.

-Oswald Chambers



RELIGION . . . is a loser,
a strictly fallen activity. It has a failed past and
a bankrupt future. There
was no religion in Eden
and there won't be any in
heaven; and in the mean-
time Jesus has died and
risen to persuade us to
knock it all off right now.


-Robert Capon



RELIGION is managed spirituality—an attempt to make people feel better about themselves without helping them discover the reality of their own friendship with the Living God. It is man's attempt to do God's work.

-Wayne Jacobsen



 ARE you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.”

*-Jesus Christ - Matthew 11:28-30
(The Message)*

5

Your Christ
is too
sectarian

*Is Christ
divided?*

1 CORINTHIANS 1:13



Disunity in
the Body of Christ
is the scandal
of the ages.
The greatest sin
of the Church is not
lying, stealing, drunken-
ness, adultery—not
even murder—
but the sin of
disunity.

-Paul E. Billheimer



The basis of
our fellowship
is not around this
doctrine, that
doctrine, the other
doctrine; or around this
group, that group,
or the other group. It is
around Christ and
only around
Christ.

-E. Stanley Jones



Christ is our unity,
not dogmas, not politics,
not rituals: our oneness
is a oneness of life.
We need for our centre no
tower with a top reaching
to heaven, we have a
living Lord who
is with us, and in Him,
we being many,
are one.

-Alexander MacLaren



We do not
make a creed,
but Christ
the ground
and term of
union.

-John Nelson Darby



My fellowship
is not concerned so much
with what I hold but with
Who holds me.
Not so much with a creed
but with the Christ.
It rests not so much
in an agreement
on the doctrine
of redemption but
in a common
interlock with
the Redeemer.


-Geoffrey T. Bull



Unity does not
come from
believing the
the same thing
but from
trusting the
same person.

-Mike Wells



 ONE might think that, with the Bible as the center of Christianity, the unity of Christians could be easily realized. But unfortunately this has not proved true, though we can consider it fortunate indeed that, as this inability to unify proves, the letter of the Bible cannot really replace the living Christ as the center of our faith.


-Kokichi Kurosaki



The position
I have ever maintained,
of union with the
whole circle
of God's redeemed,
without exclusive
attachment to
any section
of it is daily more
precious
in my eyes.

-Anthony Norris Groves



 ONE obstacle we must overcome is the illusion that we, because of our ability to "rightly divide the word," are more spiritual than those in other churches. This deception infects churches across the board. Consequently, we remain divided, kept in isolation by our own spiritual pride, never discerning that the enemy has the church down the street similarly thinking they are more spiritual than us.

-Francis Frangipagne



So long as
we judge Christ
to be dwelling
with a person,
that is our
warrant for
receiving
him.

-Anthony Norris Groves



The plagues of
controversy
and division and
weakness will be
largely lifted when
and get back to
the center—
Christ.

-E. Stanley Jones



That is the
bond of union
—that we
belong to Christ.
One with
Christ—that is
the great bond
to keep
before us.

-George Mueller



When other issues
are allowed to polarize
those for whom
Christ is Lord,
that issue, whatever it is,
is elevated to
a position of greater
importance than
Christ Himself.

-Richard Halverson



Whenever the
periphery
is in danger of
displacing
the center,
we are not far
removed from
idolatry.

-D. A. Carson



The problem
of unity
will be well on the
way to solution
if the...church makes
Christ central
and all else
marginal.

-E. Stanley Jones



Whatever
you make
the issue,
you make
the idol.

-Author Unknown



To speak plainly . . .
it is not different opinions,
nor a difference in judgment
about revealed truths,
nor a different practice in
sacred administrations, but
pride, self-interest,
love of honour, reputation,
and dominion . . . that are
the true cause
of that defect of
evangelical unity.

-John Owen



I am persuaded
the more the love
of God is shed abroad
in our hearts, the more
all narrowness of
spirit will subside
and give way.

-George Whitefield



UNTIL I can learn to see my brother's faults as a mere mote compared with the reality of the Lord living in Him and on the other hand see my own critical and negative reaction to him as a great wooden beam of sin in myself, I shall never find the key to unity . . .

-Norman Grubb



Sectarianism
is essentially a
failure... to
embrace in our
affections all who
belong to
Christ.

-Author unknown



One church. **One**
faith. **One** Lord. Not
Baptist, not Methodist,
not Adventist.

Just Christians.

No denominations.


No hierarchies.

No traditions.

Just Christ.

-Max Lucado



 BRITISH nobleman preaching the gospel in Sweden some years ago was asked by a lady what church he belonged to. "To the Church of Christ" was his reply. "Yes, but to what branch?" she insisted. "Madam, I do not belong to any branch. I belong to the Trunk."



The Father
has decreed that
Christ's Church
shall be united.
His Son has purchased it,
and the Holy Spirit
is here to establish it.
The battle you are facing
is a distraction;
the real issue is to
maintain the oneness
of Christ.

-Francis Frangipagne

6

Your Christ
is too
trivial

*For some men, straying from these
things, have turned aside to
fruitless discussion...*

1 TIMOTHY 1:6 NASB



How many
leaders have
saddled their pet
peeves, drawn their
swords of bitterness
and launched into
battle against brethren
over issues that
are not worth
discussing?

-Max Lucado



All these petty
little things that
divide the heart of the
saints is merely giving
ammunition to
the hosts of evil and
weakening the
spiritual power
of the saints.

-Harold St. John



If we do not keep
our attention
upon the ultimate
purpose of God,
we will continually
be distracted
by the lesser
purposes of God.

-Mike Bickle



We are often
distracted
from the River of Life
by the little
tributaries
that feed it.

-Rick Joyner



THE Jerusalem leaders came near to smothering the gospel in the beginning. It was Paul who loosed it from its Jewish fetters. He dared follow the living Christ into the heart of paganism. He came back and told what God had wrought. The Jerusalem leaders... drew up some of the things considered essential for the Christians among Gentiles... "to abstain from things strangled and from blood." Binding up the gospel of Christ with that! Of course it dropped away, for the gospel was at grips with bigger issues. It may be that to future Christians some of the things that we consider essential in our systems will seem just as absurd as this does to us.

-E. Stanley Jones



The problem with
the church today is
not corruption. It is not
institutionalism. No, the
problem is far more
serious than some
thing like the minister
running away with the
organist. The problem is
pettiness. Blatant
pettiness.

-Mike Yaconelli



The sensitivity
of men to
small matters
and their indifference
to great ones,
indicates a
strange
inversion.

-Blaise Pascal



THE apostolic letters . . . seek to redirect the saints back onto Christ and away from a myriad of things seeking to rob them of their time, energy, attention, focus, and spiritual devotion... They became entangled in many things. The whole controversy of Jews and Gentiles; to be circumcised, or not to be circumcised; to marry, or to remain single; to keep the Sabbath, or not to keep the Sabbath; which foods to eat, and which foods not to eat; whether one should follow Peter, or Paul, or Apollos; to speak in tongues, or not to speak in tongues; how men should behave, and how women should behave... On and on it went, and on and on it still goes today... We do not need more of the Lord, since we are already complete in Christ — we just need less of everything else.

-Chip Brogden



The main thing
is to keep
the main thing
the main
thing.


-Stephen R. Covey



Let me give you some
real mischiefs:
living for show,
losing the whole
in the particulars,
indulgence of
vital powers in
trivialities.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



 It is time the church quit pretending that pettiness doesn't matter. Pettiness has become a serious disease in the Church of Jesus Christ, a disease which continues to result in terminal cases of discord, disruption, and destruction.

-Mike Yaconelli



PERHAPS you've heard about the farmer who was out working in his field. He saw a mouse and that angered him. So he took his hoe and began to go after that mouse. He spent the next thirty minutes chasing and beating at that mouse and finally he killed it. Then he looked back and realized he had wrecked an acre of his crops.

-Warren Wiersbe



Nothing is
more unworthy
of a wise man
or ought to trouble
him more than to
have allowed
more time for
trifling useless
things than they
deserve.

-Plato



From a proud
doctor of theology,
from a contentious pastor, and
from useless
questions, may
God deliver
his Church.

-Martin Luther



How many
pulpit hours
have been
wasted on
preaching the
trivial?

-Max Lucado



WE patter on into arguments about predestination; we wool-gather in the third heaven; we digress into conjectures about the atonement; we divert ourselves by counting miracles or collecting grammatical oddities. And then St. John's vision interrupts us. We are startled out of our woolgathering digressions, our tangential arguments, our inattentive diversions. Our imaginations are kindled with a vision—of Christ. We are roused, attentive, alert. Everything suddenly is in proportion. Christ is the last word... This is the goal towards which everything is aimed... The Revelation gives us the last word on Christ, and the word is that Christ is the center and at the center.

-Eugene Peterson



Things which
matter **most**
must never
be at the **mercy**
of things which
matter **least.**

-Johann W. Goethe



WHEN we are concentrated upon the primary purposes of God the secondary purposes will then serve the one. If our eye is single, on Him, then the whole body will be full of light. If our eye is not single but divided into the many secondary purposes, it will become darkness instead of light. Even though they may be truths they will still deceive us; they will become distorted and extreme if our focus is not on the Lord Himself.

-Rick Joyner



There are an
infinity of
angles at which
one falls, only
one at which
one stands.

-G. K. Chesterton



THERE is only one safe and sure center of Christian experience, doctrine and testimony and that is Jesus Christ. Stand at any other point, no matter how good, and you will become lopsided. Stand with Him and you keep your balance, for by Him all things consist.

-Vance Havner



Look at things
largely and
don't spend
your life playing
with pieces of
scaffolding.

-Harold St. John



Gentlemen,
for the love of
God, let us buy
big maps.

-Lord Salisbury

7

Your Christ
is too
finite

*Christ . . . gives us
the best picture of God
we'll ever get.*

2 CORINTHIANS 1:6 (The Message)



Jesus Christ
Himself is the
final exegesis
of all truth. He is
all that we need to
know about
God.

-Major W. Ian Thomas



The Revelation
of God is not
a book or a
doctrine, but a
living Person.

-Emil Brunner



Wisdom,
God's blueprint
for humans, at last
herself becomes
human.

The Shekinah
turns out to have a
human face.

-N. T. Wright



Your image
of God
is the single most
important
element of your
spiritual
journey.

-Graham Cooke



JESUS
IS GOD
LIVED BY
MAN.

-Frederick Godet



He [Jesus] is
the living,
concrete,
embodied
picture of
God.

-Gregory A. Boyd



When we fail
to see Jesus
as He is, we we tend
to create God in our
own image.
This has been the
the great failing
of the church
through the ages.

-Terry Somerville



Jesus
was God's
exact
replica.

-Philip Yancey



I believe
in the God whose
exact imprint
is on display
gurgling in the manger,
arguing in the temple,
bleeding on the cross.
I believe in the God
made known in
Jesus...

-N. T. Wright



Jesus is
God simplified,
God approachable,
God understandable,
God lovable.
When I say “God”
I think Jesus.
And nothing higher can
be thought or said!
Jesus is the last
word that can be said
about God.

-E. Stanley Jones



In Jesus,
God lay down on the
dissection table,
as it were,
stretched out
in cruciform posture for
the scrutiny
of all skeptics who
have ever lived.

-Philip Yancey



Jesus is
the Word of God.
He is not
the best Word.
He is not
the ultimate Word.
He is not
the seal of series of
improving words.
He is the
Word.

-Author unknown



An old Chinese scholar,
after listening
for the first time to the
story of the loving,
sacrificing God,
exclaimed to his neighbor,
“Didn’t I tell you
there ought to be a
God like that?”

-E. Stanley Jones



There are many things
we can't explain.
However now we have
an explanation
of God's nature—
Jesus Christ.
There need never
be confusion
about Him again.

-Eugenia Price



Jesus
came to
reveal
the true face
of God.

-Xavier A. Santamaria



I know of
no God other
than the one
called Jesus
Christ.

-Martin Luther



God's total
explanation
of Himself to
man is Jesus
Christ.

-Eugenia Price



Anything that
one imagines of
God apart from
Christ is only use-
less thinking and
vain idolatry.

-Martin Luther



If I were to sit down
to try to think out
the kind of God
I would like to see
in the universe,
for the life of me,
I couldn't think
of anything higher
than that He should be
like Christ.

-E. Stanley Jones



What makes
Christianity
Christian
is centering
in God
as known
in Jesus.


-Marcus J. Borg



The greatest
news that has
ever been broken
to the human race
is the news that
God is like
Christ.

-E. Stanley Jones



 ONLY to the extent that we resolve in our minds and hearts that God looks like Jesus—dying a God-forsaken death on the cross in order to open up the fellowship of the perfect, loving, triune community—can we make any progress in expressing God's love in our lives.

-Gregory A. Boyd



GEORGE Buttrick, former chaplain at Harvard, recalls that students would come into his office, plop down on a chair and declare: “I don’t believe in God.”

Buttrick would give this disarming reply: “Sit down and tell me what kind of God you don’t believe in. I probably don’t believe in that God either.” And then he would talk about Jesus, the corrective to all our assumptions about God.

-Philip Yancey

8

Your Christ
is too
cluttered

*There is only Christ . . .
He is everything.*

COLOSSIANS 3:11 (Jerusalem Bible)



Our greatest
need and God's
greatest gift to us,
is to awaken us
to the sufficiency,
supremacy,
and destiny,
of the Lord
Jesus Christ.

-Fawn Parish



The one who
has **Christ** has
everything.
The one who has
everything except
for **Christ** really
has **nothing**.

-Augustine of Hippo



Re-state to yourself
what you believe,
then do away with
as much of it
as possible, and get
back to the bedrock
of the Cross
of Christ.

-Oswald Chambers



The risen victorious
Jesus . . . was all
the early Christian
community had . . .
That's not rhetoric;
that's history. They
had only Jesus and we
keep thinking that
we need some-
thing else.

-Brennan Manning



THERE is only one relationship that matters, and that is your personal relationship to a personal redeemer and Lord. Let everything else go, but maintain that at all costs, and God will fulfill His purpose through your life.

-Oswald Chambers



God is
calling us to an
undistracted
passion for
His Son.

-Fawn Parish



I fear, lest some-
how as the serpent
deceived
Eve by his craftiness,
so your minds may
be corrupted from
the simplicity that
is in Christ.

-Paul the Apostle



We must strive
to proclaim a message that
"re-converts" Christians
back to Christ
for ALL that He
is—transforming
many, once again, into
Person-driven
disciples.

-David Bryant



*Be Thou my vision,
O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me,
Save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought
By day or by night
Waking or sleeping,
Thy presence my light.*

-8th Century Irish hymn



He is a path, if any be misled,
He is a robe, if any naked be,
If any chance to hunger,
He is bread,
If any be a bondman,
He is free,
If any be but weak,
How strong is He,
To dead men life He is,
To sick men health,
To blind men sight,
And to the needy wealth,
A pleasure without loss,
A treasure without stealth.

-Giles Fletcher



Revival
in its essence is
nothing more
than our finding
Jesus
after having
long struggled in
other directions
and at last
finding Him.

-Roy Hession



BACK TO JESUS ALONE

When you can't figure out whether to sit at His feet, walk in a manner worthy of His call, stand in battle, or run the race with diligence, *It is time to get back to Jesus alone . . .*

When you can't even remember: The twenty-two characteristics of a good wife or husband, the seven steps of appeal to authority, the eight things to do when you are worried, or the nine ways of love, *It is time to get back to Jesus alone . . .*



When you hear: it is pre, mid, post, a, or pan, don't take the "mark," it is "time, time and half a time," and you can't get through the next hour, ***It is time to get back to Jesus alone . . .***


When you hear testimonies of others: raising the dead, praying all night, fasting forty days, leading thousands to the Lord, and memorizing the entire Bible, and you hear it through someone who hasn't done any of it, ***It is time to get back to Jesus alone . . .***



When you hear: have faith, work hard, repent, conquer, give, suffer, sacrifice, evangelize, make disciples, wait on Him, walk in Him, pick up your cross, claim your possessions, and pray, and you feel pulled then different directions on a rack, ***It is time to get back to Jesus alone . . .***


-Jim May



 HAVE a dream that the centrality and supremacy of Jesus Christ will be the focus, the mainstay, and the pursuit of every Christian and every church. And that God's dear people will no longer be obsessed with spiritual and religious things to the point of division. But that their obsession and pursuit would be a person—the Lord Jesus Christ.

-Frank Viola



 ALL the things I once thought were so important have turned to dust. Nothing can compare with the unspeakable privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master; I've thrown it all away so that I can embrace Jesus and be embraced by Him.

*-Paul the Apostle
(paraphrase)*



There is nothing
worth living for
but Him,
and His lovingkindness
is better
than life.

-Charles H. Spurgeon



All we need
are hearts that
will not be
satisfied
with something
or someone less
than Him.

-Francis Frangipagne



We must never
again allow
ourselves to
be distracted
from the
simplicity
of devotion to
Christ Himself.

-Rick Joyner



The End

*(Although we will
never get to the end of
exalting His greatness.)*



The Author

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